



**JANUARY TIP SAVINGS: \$100-\$300/YR**  
**Avoided Emissions of CO<sub>2</sub>: Up to 100 lbs./YR**

## **\$USTAINABILITY \$AVINGS TIP**

### **HARVEST MULTIPLE BENEFITS WITH RAINWATER COLLECTION** *Free, salt-free water boosts plant growth and reduces potential pollution*

January is within our winter rainy period so it's a great time to consider rainwater harvesting for your landscape. Even with the low rainfall amounts we experience in the low desert (about 8 inches a year), rainwater harvesting can be well worth the effort with the potential of capturing over 7,000 gallons for a typical home annually. Not only will you be able to save on your water bill, but your plants will look better too. Rainwater is salt-free and contains lots of minerals and nutrients that will boost plant growth. An additional benefit of capturing rainwater is that it reduces runoff into storm drains, meaning less pollutants (pesticides or fertilizers from yards) get carried to our waterways, rivers or into our groundwater.

A typical home rooftop can collect 500 gallons of water from just ½ inch of rain. That's enough to flush a toilet over 300 times.

Rainwater harvesting can be as simple as directing runoff to basins around your plants to more complex, including gutters and storage tanks (cisterns). Most property owners can design simple water harvesting systems to meet the needs of their existing site. However, designing water harvesting during new construction allows you to be more elaborate. A more sophisticated system may include cisterns, pumps and a delivery system.

#### **WATER HARVESTING DESIGN TIPS**

1. Create several small to medium water catchment areas in your landscape using berms and swales.
2. Mimic nature by creating a desert wash in the landscape that distributes the water to the planted areas – not to the street.
3. Use landscape and paving materials that allow water to penetrate into the soil and to the plant roots. **DO NOT USE PLASTIC** under the granite. Materials such as decomposed granite and open or permeable paving blocks work well.
4. Use screens to keep mosquitoes from accessing water storage tanks if you have one.

#### **CHECKLIST FOR SAVINGS**

- Call (480) 644-3306 to request a free booklet titled **Harvesting Rainwater for Landscape Use**.
- Visit our online water harvesting resources at [www.mesaaz.gov/conservation](http://www.mesaaz.gov/conservation).
- Attend one of the monthly **Living Green Workshop Series** programs to learn more about water harvesting. Our January 9 program is titled **Harvesting Rainwater for Your Landscape**. For a list of all programs visit [www.mesaaz.gov/sustainability](http://www.mesaaz.gov/sustainability) or call (480) 644-4400 for details.
- Visit the City of Mesa library for locally written **books on water harvesting**. See our recommended list of books at [www.mesalibrary.org/research/links/living-green.aspx](http://www.mesalibrary.org/research/links/living-green.aspx).
- Look into the **state tax credits** available for water harvesting installation at [www.azdor.gov/refunds%20and%20credits/graywaterchoicesmenu.htm](http://www.azdor.gov/refunds%20and%20credits/graywaterchoicesmenu.htm).

#### **\$START \$AVING**

Start saving on your water bill while doing your part for *building a sustainable community*. Visit our Web site for more sustainability savings tips at [www.mesaaz.gov/sustainability](http://www.mesaaz.gov/sustainability).

*Learn to live Green*